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21 February 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Ad Hoc Group on Security Handling of

Satellite Reconnaissance Materials

SUBJECT:

Procedures for Decontrol and Downgrading of T-KH Materials

- 1. The Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group has requested that the attached papers be forwarded for your consideration. You will note that this presentation plans for a covering memorandum representing the consensus of the Group to go forward to the Board. This in turn will be accompanied by tabs: Tab A representing all the factors considered by the Group; Tab B being pertinent to costs; and Tab C presenting the opinions of the security advisers to the Ad Hoc Group.
- 2. While the Chairman intends to provide sufficient time for careful study of the attached material, it must also be noted that the Board is pressing for conclusion of various actions pertinent to decontrol. It is requested that members who have substantive suggestions regarding the language in the paper itself and the tabs forward these to office prior to close of business Monday, 27 February. It should then be possible to circulate substantial changes to all members and for the Group to meet again prior to the end of the week of 27 February.

Executive Secretary, COMOR

Ad Hoc Group, COMOR

Attachment: Draft Report

Copies 1,2 State TCO for Mr. Baraz

3,4 DIA TCO for

5,6 NPIC for 7,8 ORR TCO for

9 NRO TCO for L 10-20 SA(COMOR)/DDS&T 25X1A 25X1A

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MEMORANDUM FOR: United States Intelligence Board

SUBJECT:

Procedures for Decontrol and Downgrading of T-KH Materials

- appointed an ad hoc group to study the problems involved in decontrol and downgrading of T-KH material. The ad hoc group was not charged to make recommendations for or against decontrol and downgrading but was charged to determine how such measures might be accomplished if a policy decision were made by appropriate officials to accomplish decontrol or downgrading. In pursuing its work, however, the ad hoc group has inevitably had to consider the way in which various decontrol measures for T-KH material might benefit the intelligence community or increase the security risk to sensitive information. These various points are discussed in context in Tab A.
  - 2. Our principal conclusions follow:
  - a. The critical point requiring policy decision
    before the implementation of any decontrol or downgrading
    measures is the willingness of the United States Government

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to reveal the existence of a classified satellite reconnaissance program at the SECRET level. If the Government is not willing to make this decision, there is relatively little that can be done to increase the utility of TALENT-KEYHOLE material other than by changes in sanitization procedures. The increased gain to be expected from such measures, however, is likely to be fairly small and must be measured against the costs inherent in sanitization.

- b. There are such serious administrative, technical, and security problems involved in the blanket downgrading or decontrol of portions of the material now in the T-KH compartment, the KH-4 photography, for example, that we do not feel that such a course would be advisable. These problems are discussed at greater length in Tabs A, B, and C.
- c. The intelligence community is not faced
  with a completely black or white situation. If the United
  States Government is willing to reveal the existence of a
  classified satellite reconnaissance program at the SECRET

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level, a series of measures could be considered which would greatly enhance the utility of TALENT-KEYHOLE material but which would not reveal sensitive technical information or critical factors concerning the magnitude and success of the program. These measures would result in some increased security risk but this increase could be kept fairly small and the most sensitive aspects of the material now protected by the TALENT-KEYHOLE compartment would continue to be protected. Such measures could include:

could:	include:	
	(1) Release at the SECRET level	
	of KH-5 (DAFF) photography and photography	
	obtained by the cameras	25X1
25X1D	of the KH-4 systems.	
	(2) Changes in sanitization procedures	
	to permit photography from the cameras to	25X1
	be used in production of photo interpretation reports,	
	and more liberally employed in maps, area studies,	
	and other products. Such products would be at the	
	SECRET level, while the photography would itself	25X
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be retained within the TALENT-KEYHOLE system.

Special guidance concerning the content, format,
and wording of these products would have to be
promulgated if this course is adopted.

- pieces of TALENT-KEYHOLE photography in the production of briefing and illustrative materials for use at the SECRET level in accordance with procedures which would prevent the reconstruction of the technical characteristics and full operational capability of the camera system by which it was obtained.
- photography at the SECRET level after the point in time at which we estimate that the Russians and Chinese Communists fully appreciate the resolution and operational achievements within the capability of that system (we estimate that that point is still several years in the future).
- 3. We recommend that if a decision is made to decontrol or downgrade some part of the material now protected by

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the TALENT-KEYHOLE compartment, it be done in accordance with the conclusions outlined above. The factors bearing on those conclusions are discussed in greater detail in Tab A.

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Tab A

Discussion of Problems Involved in Decontrol and Downgrading of T-KH Materials

1. The Ad Hoc Committee has received a series of briefing
pertinent to problems involved in decontrol and downgrading of the
material now in or designated to be included in the T-KH security
compartment. After considerable study and discussion, we have
summarized our views under the following headings:
Advantages of De

# Advantages of Decontrol and Downgrading in Certain Fields

2. Satellite photography is inherently an efficient and relatively inexpensive source of information for the production of maps and the conduct of a wide variety of studies which relate to the physical environment of the world. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been conducting studies in the TALENT-KEYHOLE compartment and has concluded that if it were possible to downgrade substantial quantities of satellite photography it would be possible to undertake studies of the earth's environment on a much broader scale. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has come to the same conclusion and is considering a large scale program for the acquisition of satellite photography on

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Tab A

an unclassified basis to be used for such studies. Other government agencies such as the Departments of Interior and Agriculture are also interested in applying photography to their problems on a large scale.

- as our capability to photograph the earth develops, an ever-increasing number of users of photography will be found. Such offices as that of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have made extensive use of T-KH photography to produce sanitized maps and charts at the SECRET and CONFIDENTIAL levels, outside of the T-KH compartment. As indicated by the interest of other agencies of the U.S. Government in the Gemini photography collected by NASA on an unclassified basis, there are many other studies of the earth to which photography will be a major contributor.
- 4. In view of the growing interest in the use of satellite photography in a wide range of studies of the earth, there would appear to be many advantages to the U.S. Government in cost and over-all efficiency if suitable ways could be found for exploiting for these purposes the large quantities of photography that have already been collected and the additional photography that will be collected under

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the National Reconnaissance Program in future years. Even though it is relatively efficient, the collection of photography of the entire world is a tremendous job. For several years the intelligence community has been working on a program of KH-4 coverage of the Sino-Soviet bloc and approximately 25 million square miles outside of the Sino-Soviet bloc for use in the production of sanitized maps and charts. In spite of the effort devoted to this program, approximately nine million square miles have not yet been covered. If satisfactory ways could be found to use photography collected under this mapping program at a lower classification, it might reduce the need for the development of unclassified satellite photographic systems to collect duplicate photography.

#### Public Knowledge of Satellite Photographic Capabilities

5. The NRO has agreements with NASA designed to protect the technology involved in achieving the higher resolutions already obtained under the National Reconnaissance Program. On the basis of the photography already acquired by NASA in the Gemini program, however, and the photography NASA is likely to acquire on an unclassified basis in the Apollo program, the possibility of conducting a large scale photographic program from orbiting satellites will be

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Handle Via TALENT-KEYHOLE Control System Only Common knowledge. Any qualified scientist or technician in the United States or abroad should be able to extrapolate from this knowledge to deduce that it is possible to acquire better quality photography than that which has been made public. On the other hand, they would still be unable to deduce the full extent of the solution to technical problems involving resolution and would not be able to deduce the operational effectiveness and thus the capability of the National Reconnaissance Program as a whole. As will be mentioned later, these facts could be deduced only from access to the photography itself.

## The Physical Problem of Decontrol

6. The problem of decontrol and downgrading of previously acquired photography now in the TALENT-KEYHOLE compartment is large and complex. Over two million feet of original satellite photographic film has been collected and many duplicates have been made. In the normal course of events, each frame of photography released from a compartment would have to be reclassified. This process is costly in terms of time, money, and administration. Some of the actual costs involved are discussed in Tab B.

- 7. There are a number of alternative approaches, each with advantages and disadvantages. Decision as to which route to follow will be aided by a more detailed examination of the community problems that need to be solved:
  - a. Abolition of the TALENT-KEYHOLE compartment would not necessitate removal of the old classification and putting on a new classification until the photography was actually used in the production of reports, illustrations, briefing materials, etc. The great majority of the photography already collected would probably have lost its usefulness for the majority of these purposes and the volume requiring physical reclassification, therefore, would probably be small. This would reduce the cost of reclassification considerably.
  - b. Decontrol and downgrading of a large volume of photography, with other photography remaining within the protection of a security compartment, presents a problem that is likely to be both more complex and more expensive.

    The reclassification could be carried out in one of two ways:
    - (1) First, the TALENT-KEYHOLE compartment would be abolished and the photography

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needed for the purposes outlined above (7a) would be reclassified as needed. This would mean, however, that a new compartment would have to be established to furnish protection to the material that is deemed to be too sensitive to be downgraded. This would involve a physical reclassification of the photography requiring protection to identify it with the new compartment.

- need for decontrol and downgrading of a large volume of photography would be to retain the TALENT-KEYHOLE compartment for the information which continued to need special security protection and to reclassify the material that had been selected for release. This would involve a physical reclassification of the photography to be downgraded.
- c. If it is decided that at some specific date new photography of a given type would receive a lower classification and be handled outside of the TALENT-KEYHOLE system, this would permit photography acquired prior to that date to be left

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in the TALENT-KEYHOLE system. The problem of wholesale reclassification of previously acquired photography would be avoided, but a new problem arises. Photographic analysis of new photography will not be meaningful unless reference is made to old photography. It would be necessary, therefore, to reclassify the old photography used for comparative purposes whenever such an occasion arose.

d. Yet another alternative available would be to retain the actual satellite photography, past and future, in the TALENT-KEYHOLE compartment but to authorize the publication of photographic interpretation reports based on this photography at a lower classification. Through a revision of the Sanitization Manual, it should be possible to use selected photography for illustrative purposes without revealing technical characteristics of the satellite reconnaissance system which still require protection.

#### Security Implications of Release

8. The principal security factor inherent in release of the results of photographic reconnaissance from T-KH is that essentially the United States Government is admitting officially, at the ultimate

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classification decided upon, that the United States is conducting a satellite reconnaissance program over the Soviet bloc and Communist China. It seems clear to us that there would be little point in releasing information derived from the TALENT-KEYHOLE system unless the classification of the release were at least SECRET or below (TOP SECRET controls are usually as difficult as or more difficult to follow than T-KH controls). Otherwise, there would be too small a gain in the increased utility of the material. Responsible security officers have advised us in the strongest terms /Tab C/ that the SECRET classification will provide relatively little true security as compared to the T-KH compartment. If a decision is made to admit officially at the SECRET level that the United States is conducting a satellite reconnaissance program, the decision should be made with this fact in mind.

9. As a practical matter, however, the existence of a United States satellite reconnaissance program is already known to the Soviet Union and is either known or widely suspected by a great many informed people throughout the world. It seems to us that at this point the main role that security should play with regard to the satellite reconnaissance program is to protect the security of certain

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We feel that one of the chief dangers of public confirmation would be the possibility that it would cause the Soviet Union or others to undertake a political campaign which might inhibit our use of the program or stimulate target countries to take other measures which would reduce the value of the photography. We also believe that there is a danger that if the information were handled at the SECRET level, there might in some circumstances be such a rash of leaks to the press about the successes of the program that the Soviets or others might become convinced that the leaks were part of an officially inspired campaign and that this in turn might have the same effect as official confirmation.

satellite photography of the Soviet bloc, Communist China, and a few other countries might be sensitive about the security implications of our program. A large number of photographs of other portions of the world taken in the course of the Gemini program have already been released on an unclassified basis without adverse reaction. It is possible that if the satellite photography were of a larger scale more sensitivity might be aroused, but there are

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probably large areas of the world for which we could use satellite photography at the SECRET level or even on an unclassified basis without creating an adverse reaction. The manner in which the photography was released and the nature of the accompanying publicity, if any, would probably have an important bearing on the acquiescence of the countries involved.

	Technological Security Factors		
	11. The main concern of the BYEMAN and the KEYHOLE		
	security systems, insofar as they pertain to photographic satellite		
	reconnaissance, has been to protect operational details which could		
	permit identification and sizing of the reconnaissance programs.		
	Certain pieces of technical information are still believed to be unique		
	to the United States. In this latter category, the main technological		
	factors which contribute to the success of the U.S. program,	NRO	25.
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			25X1D
25X1D	Representatives of the NRO reported to us that they		
	believe that the Soviet Union could make important deductions		25
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concerning both of these points if a single frame of full-format\*

photography were to fall into their hands or if they were to obtain a mosaic constructed of large pieces of the photography. A mosaic made up of many small pieces, while not precluding damaging deductions, would complicate the problem of making those deductions.

In this context those who briefed us concerning the Soviet satellite reconnaissance system were careful to point out that the one critical

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Rationale for Protection Based on Study of Soviet Reconnaissance Program

12. It has been argued that since the Soviet Union is conducting its own satellite reconnaissance program with both a

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<sup>\*</sup>Full-format photography includes the original negative, duplicate positives and duplicate negatives, contact prints, and any other reproductions which would reveal the actual format, scale, resolution, and other characteristics of the camera system acquiring the photography.

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search and a high resolution pointing system, it must be sufficiently aware of our capabilities in satellite reconnaissance to reduce the need to maintain the security compartment to protect the details concerning results of the U.S. reconnaissance program. This rationalization has been examined in the context of our knowledge of the Soviet reconnaissance program and the following deductions appear to us to dictate caution in imputing too much knowledge to the Soviets:

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AHG-D-3 Tab A 25X1D 25X1D (4)The Soviet system is operated primarily against targets in the United States and countries around the periphery of the Soviet Union, including Communist China. So far there is no evidence that the Soviet reconnaissance program is being used for geodetic 25X1

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Conclusion 14.		basis of the considerations outlined above, we
conclude	that:	
	a.	There is relatively little that can be done to

increase the utility of satellite photography unless the U.S.

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Government is willing to reveal officially at the SECRET level that it is conducting a satellite reconnaissance program. On the other hand, if this fact can be revealed at the SECRET level, a number of measures can be adopted which would increase the utility of the photography but which would continue to protect technical information and the operational success of the program.

- b. The photographic product of the main cameras would reveal technical information of value to the Soviet Union if it were to fall into Soviet hands.
- c. The photographic product of the main cameras, especially those producing high resolution photography, should have maximum protection on two scores:
  - (1) Possession of photography would permit
    the Soviets to evaluate our capabilities and take
    countermeasures.

ddition to the Soviet Union there are
which might make
t of the possession of photography or
nited States appeared to flaunt its ability

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Tab A

	d.	There are large areas of the world for which
we c	ould use	satellite photography at the SECRET level or
even	on an un	classified basis without creating an adverse
reac	tion.	

- e. If the United States Government is willing to admit at the SECRET level that it is engaged in a satellite reconnaissance program, it should be possible to authorize the production of photo interpretation reports at the SECRET level; however,
  - (1) Photography from the primary cameras would not be released; and
  - (2) The reports would not reveal critical technical information concerning the reconnaissance system that collected the photography.

(3)	It should be possible to release
photography	collected by the KH-5 (DAFF) system and

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f. If photo interpretation reports based on photography are released at the SECRET level and if the photographic product

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is made available at the same level, wide use could be made of information and photography that is now closely held.

g. There would be both a decrease and an increase in security risk if the fact of overhead reconnaissance is classified SECRET. In our estimation, however, if the course of action outlined in <u>e</u> above is followed, this risk could be minimized. Recognition of the fact that satellite photography makes a major contribution to all-source reports will increase the confidence factor. Furthermore, if photography from the secondary cameras is made available for appropriate use by the U.S. Government, it will not only serve as a useful backup to intelligence but will reduce speculation as to the existence of a satellite photo capability.

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Factors Affecting the Cost of Downgrading T-KH Material

- 1. The material currently contained in the TALENT-KEYHOLE compartment consists of the following:
  - a. Approximately two million feet of original full-format photography. Nearly all of this original photography has been reproduced in the form of duplicate positives and duplicate negatives. Standard distribution of full-format photography within the intelligence community involves as many as 38 duplicates of a given mission.
  - b. Selected photography of sketches and other materials used for illustrative purposes.
  - c. Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ photo interpretation reports which have been reproduced in as many as copies.
  - d. Approximately \_\_\_\_\_\_ intelligence
    reports produced by intelligence analysts, based in whole
    or in part on the material contained in the photo interpretation
    reports. These reports have been reproduced in as many as
    \_\_\_\_\_\_ copies.

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e. A large but unknown quantity of drafts, memoranda, and other correspondence including at least some TALENT-KEYHOLE information.

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3. While firm estimates are not available for the cost of reclassifying KH-4 photography held by other organizations, we would expect them to be roughly comparable to the DIA figures. The organizations that would have downgrading problems of a comparable scale would include NPIC, CIA, Army, Navy, and Air Force Intelligence, and the Strategic Air Command.

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5. In view of the foregoing, decontrol of T-KH reports would have to be accomplished on a selective case-by-case basis.

As a minimum, mission-oriented reports such as the OAKs, Mission Review Reports, etc., would require careful editing and rewrite to remove data not subject to decontrol and then subsequent republication. Detailed intelligence reports and studies would, in addition, require a thorough review by an analyst/interpreter team to ensure detection and deletion of any data not meeting the planned classification/handling control level of the decontrolled report. It is suspected that in many

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instances it would prove more economical to recompile these complex T-KH reports from the photography rather than to engage in such a painstaking review by analyst/interpreters.

- 6. In summary, decontrol of T-KH photography is a mechanical process which can be accomplished by relatively low-grade technicians. Decontrol of T-KH reports is a costly complex problem requiring high use of editors, analysts, and photo interpreters in addition to the republication costs.
- 7. The great majority of the illustrative material and the miscellaneous correspondence would probably not have to be reclassified to the extent that it would have to be recreated, but it would involve processes something on the order of those required for the republishing of intelligence reports.

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Comments of Security Officers on SECRET vs. T-KH

1. Presented below are background data related to the effect, in terms of security, of decontrol of any non-source sanitized satellite reconnaissance photography or intelligence reports from TALENT-KEYHOLE to the level of SECRET classification. This background data is provided in three sections as follows:

# A Comparison of Security Protection Provided Under SECRET Classification and Under TALENT-KEYHOLE Controls

- 2. Special security indoctrination related specifically to the subject matter is afforded under T-KH, which stresses the prohibition against official confirmation under national policy (a unique security instruction). No such special security indoctrination is provided for under SECRET classification security procedures. It has beed suggested that this deficiency could be corrected by some administrative instruction such as a NSAM published at the SECRET security level.
- 3. T-KH involves a centralized "must-know" approval authority with subsequent accounting to higher authority. "Must-know" review for access to specific information classified SECRET is on a more generalized basis if in reality at all existent.

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- 4. Personnel security review is far superior for T-KH access than for SECRET access:
  - a. Investigative scope requirements for T-KH access exceed EO 10865 requirements for TOP SECRET.

    SECRET access requires only national agency checks. There are numerous instances of individuals approved SECRET based upon NACs whose clearance was reconsidered following receipt of a background investigation initiated under action for a higher clearance level.
  - b. Factors related to the possibility of the individual's being subjected to duress are stressed to a far greater degree under T-KH than for a SECRET security clearance.
  - c. Under T-KH, personnel security review and approval is the responsibility of SIOs. For SECRET security access it is the responsibility of a wide variety of elements, few of whom are competent to assess the relative sensitivity of the information.
  - d. For SECRET access denial of a security clearance involves a process of judicial review which, due to

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Tab C

- U.S. Supreme Court rulings, most favors the rights of the individual rather than the Government's need for security.

  Under current T-KH procedures, the advantage is still with the Government and in cases of doubt, the calculation of security risk is most heavily weighed in its favor.
- e. There are no known instances of leaks through T-KH personnel. There are numerous reported instances of leaks through personnel possessing SECRET security clearances.
- 5. Physical security measures are more stringent under T-KH. It is believed significant that in almost all reported Soviet interrogations of U.S. personnel, questioning by the interrogators included physical security.
- 6. Delivery and accountability procedures are superior from a security standpoint under T-KH. For example, registered mail may be used for SECRET information.
- 7. TALENT-KEYHOLE security procedures are uniformly applied because management of security is directly responsive to the offices of the DCI. Under SECRET security classification, security procedures may vary in accordance with departmental regulations.

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Tab C

## The Effect of Decontrol Upon the Covert NRP Organization

8.	The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) and the
National Reco	onnaissance Program (NRP) involve essentially a covert
	the existence of which is not confirmed in documentation
which is not s	subject to either BYEMAN or TALENT security controls.
	l de la companya de

10. One effect of decontrol of any satellite photography or intelligence reportings, therefore, would be a gradual surfacing of the now covert NRO and the NRP and of many of the sensitive NRP

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Governmental and industrial facilities, thereby increasing the risk of penetration of the program by foreign intelligence organizations.

The Matter of Irresponsible Speculation Related to U.S. Satellite Reconnaissance Activities

- 11. There has been considerable reporting in the U.S. press related to U.S. satellite reconnaissance. These reportings have usually presented this subject in a manner which implies official confirmation. These reportings are undesirable, therefore, in that they provide the sort of provocation that national policy related to satellite reconnaissance was designed to prevent, and to a degree they are disturbing to security discipline.
- non-source sanitized photography and intelligence under SECRET security classification would permit publication at a comparable security level of the confirmed fact of U.S. satellite reconnaissance along with the national policy prohibitions related thereto, resulting, hopefully, in some curtailment of irresponsible speculation related to the subject. This suggestion concludes that the officially confirmed fact of U.S. satellite reconnaissance can best be protected by affording it a lesser degree of security. Also inherent in this suggestion is the implication

that most of the U.S. press articles related to satellite reconnaissance result from individuals in or associated in some manner with the U.S. Government and who possess a SECRET security clearance. It also implies that the national policy prohibitions related to satellite reconnaissance are not in some manner being communicated to personnel not possessing either BYEMAN or TALENT clearances. The conclusion and both implications need to be examined in light of the following:

- a. Security analyses of such reportings reflect consistent accuracy with respect to two subjects:
  - (1) The fact of U.S. photographic satellite reconnaissance; and
  - (2) Attribution of specific reported intelligence to the photographic satellite source, either in whole or in part.

Conversely, they reflect almost universal inaccuracy with respect to specific technology and operational modus operandi, and the articles consistently confuse the missions of DoD space programs.

b. These security analyses have failed to confirm implications contained in such reportings that the fact of

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Control System Only Tab C

satellite reconnaissance and the attribution of reported intelligence to the satellite source was supplied by U.S. Government officials.

- c. These security analyses have generally concluded that the reportings result from a level of educated press presumption, provoked in most instances by a U.S. announcement related to specific intelligence, the letting of a "white" DoD space program contract, U.S. reportings to the U.N. Space Registry, etc. In addition there is considerable documented evidence available to the press related to U.S. intention and ability to conduct satellite reconnaissance which was generated during the SAMOS and pre-SAMOS time period. NASA space photography obtained from Project Gemini has added to the bank of information now available to the press.
- d. Whereas there have been numerous studies, proposals, etc., prepared by individuals not possessing either BYEMAN or TALENT clearances (security is not intended to create a monopoly on good ideas), the author has in most instances had the foresight (prompted by we know not what) to affix some level of security classification. Company

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proprietary protection was also frequently applied when the study or proposal emanated from U.S. Government contractors.

There is no known instance wherein these resulted in press publication and in most instances the problem was easily brought under control.

e. DoD Directive 5200.13 (classified SECRET)

provides that association of payload or mission with specific

DoD space programs should be handled under the most strict

security procedures and that all public releases would require

prior approval of the Assistant Secretary of Defense/Public

Affairs (OSD/PA). This directive was promulgated (although

it of course does not say so) to ensure the appropriate

implementation of national policy related to satellite

reconnaissance. A "drop off" included in the OSD/PA review,

is the NRO Staff, which reviews proposed releases not only for

their security content but also in light of the speculative

reporting related to satellite reconnaissance such releases

might provoke. In cases of serious concern related to security,

the advice of the Director of Security/CIA is also sought. In

addition, all U.S. intelligence organizations and agencies

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possess internal directives precluding unapproved comment to the press on any subject.

reporting related to U.S. satellite reconnaissance is undoubtedly prejudicial to U.S. interests, there appears to be currently no basis upon which to conclude that the decontrol of the fact of satellite reconnaissance and certain NRP satellite photography from T-KH to a level of SECRET security classification will in any way alleviate this situation. Instead it is possible, if not probable, that U.S. press reportings related to this subject will become more factual.